

Re: SINCLAIR BROADCASTING Licenses

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

This is yet another example of Sinclair forcing their political agenda without regard to their responsibility as a licensee of the public airwaves. Earlier this year, Sinclair ABC TV affiliates refused to broadcast a Nightline tribute to our service men and women who lost their lives during the fighting in Iraq. Sinclair claimed that the program was political. Their action was cold hearted and disrespectful of our troops. It also was political.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Thank you.